



Technology and Distance Learning for California Adult Education

Appendix F - Addendum

Annual Report
2021-2022



Prepared for:
Adult Education Office (AEO), Career and College Transition Division (CCTD),
at the California Department of Education (CDE)

Submitted by:



Sacramento County Office of Education

Contract Number CN220124

2023

OTAN activities are funded by contract CN220124 in the Adult Education Office (AEO), Career and College Transition Division (CCTD), at the California Department of Education (CDE), with funds provided through Federal P.L., 105-220, Section 223. However, the content does not necessarily reflect the position of the department or the U.S. Department of Education.

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Appendix F

California Department of Education

WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning
California Update

Program Year 2021–2022

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Introduction

For many years, adult learner participation in distance learning programs in California adult education agencies has been reported on and analyzed in the hopes of better understanding the state of distance learning from year-to-year and determining shifts and trends in the delivery of distance learning. The events and impacts of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic which officially began in the US in March 2020, as well as the volatility of frequent policy changes since then, have sent teachers and students back and forth from remote teaching and learning to in-person classes on a number of occasions. Nevertheless, California adult education providers and educators continue to show resilience, ingenuity, tenacity, and grit in their perseverance to provide educational services to adult learners in our state. This report provides a broad overview of the state of distance learning in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funded adult schools and community colleges in California in Program Year (PY) 2021–2022 with recommendations for further research.

The Background of This Report


As a result of California state legislation in the early 1990s, distance learning was first seen as an “innovation program” that adult education agencies could create by spending up to five percent of their apportionment on non-traditional educational approaches. Distance learning reports initially included information from the Innovation Program applications that agencies submitted annually, adult school program data reports, and data collected from local adult education agencies that submitted data to the National Reporting System (NRS). In Program Year (PY) 2009–10, flex funding was legislated for California school districts, allowing funds allocated for adult education to be used for any purpose local school boards of education deemed necessary. School districts were no longer bound by the California Education Code to serve adult learners, and state reporting requirements were no longer required. In subsequent years until 2013–14, only the NRS data was reported on in distance learning reports.

Starting in 2001, adult education agencies submitted what in time after a few revisions became an annual Technology and Distance Learning Plan (TDLP) that was meant to capture an agency’s ongoing and proposed technology integration goals as well as data from a self-assessment of teacher technology skills and a learner survey on technology access and usage. Aggregated information from the TDLP has been included in the Outreach and Technical Assistance Network’s (OTAN) annual reports. In the 2016–17 OTAN annual report, the first comprehensive distance learning report was included that took a deeper dive into both the TDLP and NRS data. In the OTAN annual reports since then, TDLP and NRS data has continued to be included and reviewed with more in-depth analysis and – in the last few years – recommendations for further research. The TDLP was recently incorporated into a new reporting deliverable known as the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP), but agency technology goals and the teacher and learner survey data gathered for the CIP are still key elements of distance learning reports.

In the first half of 2022, OTAN, in partnership with advisory group members, draft reviewers, and partner organizations, produced the *California Adult Education Digital Learning Guidance*. The purpose of the *Digital Learning Guidance* is to enable adult educators in California to design and implement effective digital learning experiences. The *Digital Learning Guidance* is intended to

inform the practice of all California educators, support staff, and school leadership who work with adult learners. The heart of the *Digital Learning Guidance* includes six chapters which focus on the following topics:

- Ensuring equity and access
- Foundations of adult education and digital learning
- Designing flexible learning experiences
- Adopting models that work
- Data-driven instruction and digital assessments
- Fostering healthy, equitable, and inclusive digital communities

OTAN is currently considering how the *Digital Learning Guidance* can potentially provide a framework for future distance learning reports, reorganizing the data and its analysis to better inform the broad topics listed in the document. OTAN will also look to research done in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic that studies adult learner participation in the intensive period of distance learning that education temporarily became. For more information, please visit the [Digital Learning Guidance](#)  section of the OTAN website.

The Content of This Report

Changes were made to this report in PY 2020–2021, namely in the scope of the report and a desire to move beyond quantitative analysis into more qualitative evaluation of the ways in which adult education agencies are serving California. This report builds on these changes and in places references data from prior years, provides comparisons and offers insights into some of the new delivery models such as HyFlex options, and further defines and provides context for blended distance learning.

The report refers to program offerings with an online element of more than 50% as blended distance learning programs as the findings in this report are based on data collected by CASAS and OTAN using the 50% demarcation with respect to students reported in regular classroom or distance learning settings. We use the term blended distance learning as a “working definition” in this report to underline the fact that most distance learning is blended unless it has no in-person element and is provided exclusively by remote instruction. Blended learning has the potential of serving as a working definition that is crafted in a local context, responding to demographic circumstances and curricular needs of its target population. However, common definitions are needed so that data can be collected consistently across different contexts. Last year’s report included this recommendation with respect to enabling more detailed and consistent reporting of the type and amount of blended programming. Agencies need guidance with more detailed and consistent definitions and practices for reporting data to accurately reflect their service delivery that meets a variety of student needs.

Further, the report again includes a component of agency voice where adult schools were invited to share their agency goals, practices, professional development strategies to ease the burden and stress on teachers pushed into a new delivery model that they may, or may not, be well prepared for, student barriers to learning and how they addressed them, and other issues that

rose to the top that provide insight and ideas to potentially improve program delivery through distance and blended offerings to meet the needs of learners.

This report represents an effort to not only look at the statistics, but to also provide data to inform meaningful conversations with agencies offering distance and blended programs with learners during the past year and for the future. In last year's report, we asked, "What will our 'new normal' look like?" Its findings showed that distance and blended learning were not only beneficial to teachers and students, but they also presented alternative program delivery options that are scalable and demonstrated that agencies could be flexible to respond to changes in students' needs, teachers' expertise, program capacities, and client demographics. This year, we saw instructors and learners returning to in-person instruction, so we are starting to see what our "new normal" looks like after close to 100% online instruction. Some agencies returned to the way their programs were delivered before the pandemic, while others are exploring various blended distance learning approaches that respond to the needs of differentiated student demographics. Although there is a wealth of data collected annually already, our additional surveying also showed that there is more to tell about the efforts of California adult schools to make different options all work simultaneously.

Such use of technology has the potential to extend learning. It also leverages the opportunities to integrate and expand the learning process inside and outside of the classroom, serving a growing demographic that flows in and out of learning due to the precarity of employment or other changes in the lives of our learners that require the flexibility of a multitude of learning models they can choose from. Blended distance learning is a viable alternative and extension of face-to-face ABE/ASE and ESL program delivery, chiefly because of its flexibility, scalability, and responsiveness. This versatility of blended distance learning has the potential to translate into higher quality, greater satisfaction, more extensive reach, and increased return on investment.

Future research and development should focus on blended distance learning programs and the effective use of technology, locally driven by agencies and consortia, with support provided by the state via organizations such as OTAN, the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), and the California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project (CALPRO). This report includes a list of recommendations from the OTAN perspective.

Methodology

This report presents findings drawing from data with quantitative and qualitative properties. It draws from data for PY 2021–2022 provided by OTAN and CASAS, such as the NRS Federal Reporting Table 4 (n=185,371) and Table 4C (n=67,588), the Student Technology Intake Survey (n=27,657) and Teacher Self-Assessment (n=3,056) (both CIP requirements), the WIOA Title II AEFLA Program Implementation Survey (n=218), and the new WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey (n=87). The survey tools that collected data referred to in this report can be found in Appendix A.

In early 2023, OTAN conducted the latter mentioned survey as an additional survey with the goal of deepening understanding of experiences with distance learning at WIOA Title II funded agencies and their adult schools. Further explored were agencies' experiences with respect to student persistence, waitlists or program availability, blended and distance program delivery including HyFlex options, program strategies to respond to the limitations of in-person program

delivery due to the pandemic, professional development supports, and “future proofing” for responsive and resilient program delivery. The survey was designed based on the focus groups conducted as part of the data generation and reporting in the previous year. This year, the report casts a much wider net by leveraging survey methodology with the opportunity of open-ended questions and follow-up interviews.

Selected findings were first presented during a workshop at OTAN’s annual Technology and Distance Learning Symposium at the Chula Vista Adult School (Sweetwater Union High School District) on March 4, 2023, and a meeting of the OTAN Advisory Committee on March 15, 2023. In facilitated discussions, participants were invited to reflect on the findings and engage in a discussion about the role of online and blended learning as well as the impact of technology adoption in the delivery of program offerings. This report shares some feedback from participants in these sessions throughout the report and includes some recommendations that reflect the day-to-day experience of those in the adult education field.

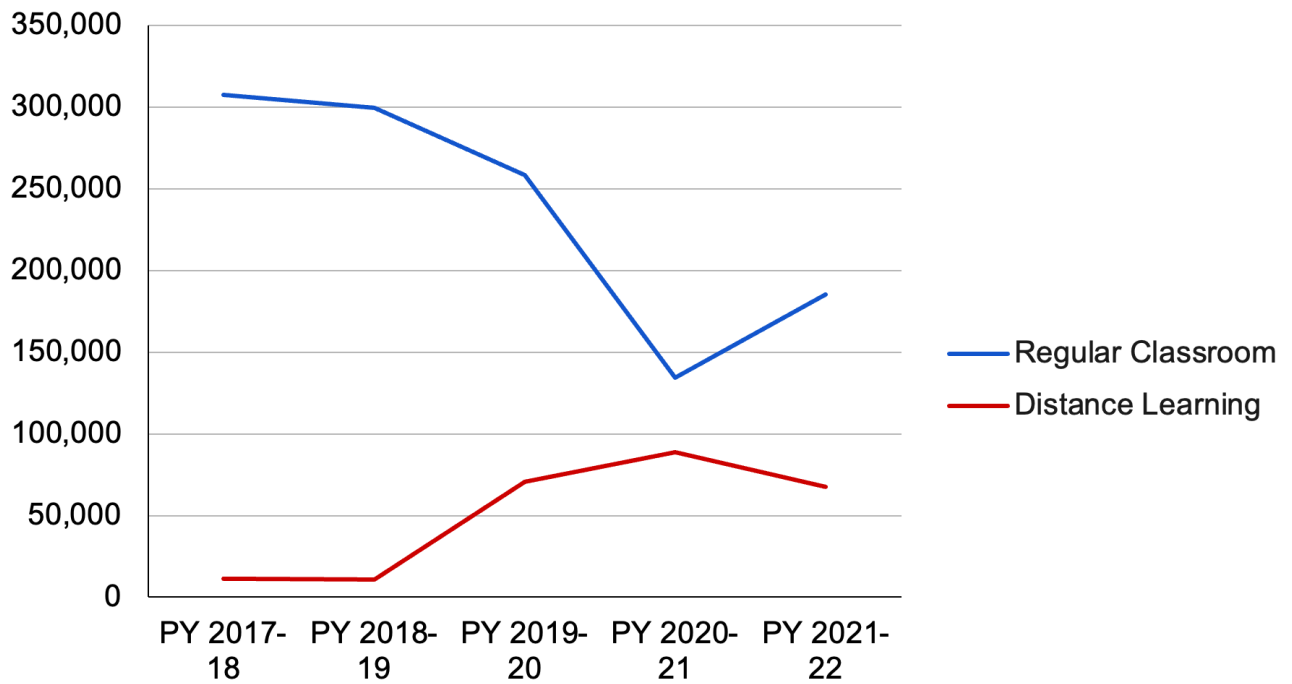
Findings

The findings in this report are based on Program Year (PY) 2021–22 data but also include in places comparative data from reports from previous years. This year’s findings need to be viewed in the context of ongoing limitations to in-person program delivery for some adult schools as some returned to full in-person instruction.

The Figure 1 chart and table display the combined adult student enrollments for regular classroom and distance learning students for the Program Years from 2017–18 to 2021–22. In PY 2021–22, there were 185,371 students in regular classrooms and 67,588 in distance learning classrooms. This represents an increase of students in regular classrooms and a decrease of students in distance learning over PY 2020–21 when there were 134,492 students in regular classrooms and 88,749 distance learning students. Given the limitations and challenges with respect to in-person program delivery due to the pandemic during PY 2020–21, a decline in regular classroom enrollments and an increase in distance learning enrollments were not surprising.

Before the start of the pandemic, in PY 2018–19, there were 299,720 students in regular classrooms and 10,574 distance learning students reported. Of note is that in the three years between 2018 and 2021, regular classroom enrollments decreased by more than half, a result of suspending in-person instruction at the start of the pandemic, which increased again in PY 2021–22. At the same time, distance learning enrollments increased by more than 8 times in the same time period, showing the responsiveness and innovation of adult schools by providing remote instruction at a rate many times the distance learning offerings before the pandemic. In PY 2021–22, the number of distance learning students declined by 24% while the number of students in regular classrooms increased by 28% compared to the previous PY, but not to the extent of pre-pandemic levels.

Regular Classroom and Distance Learner Enrollments



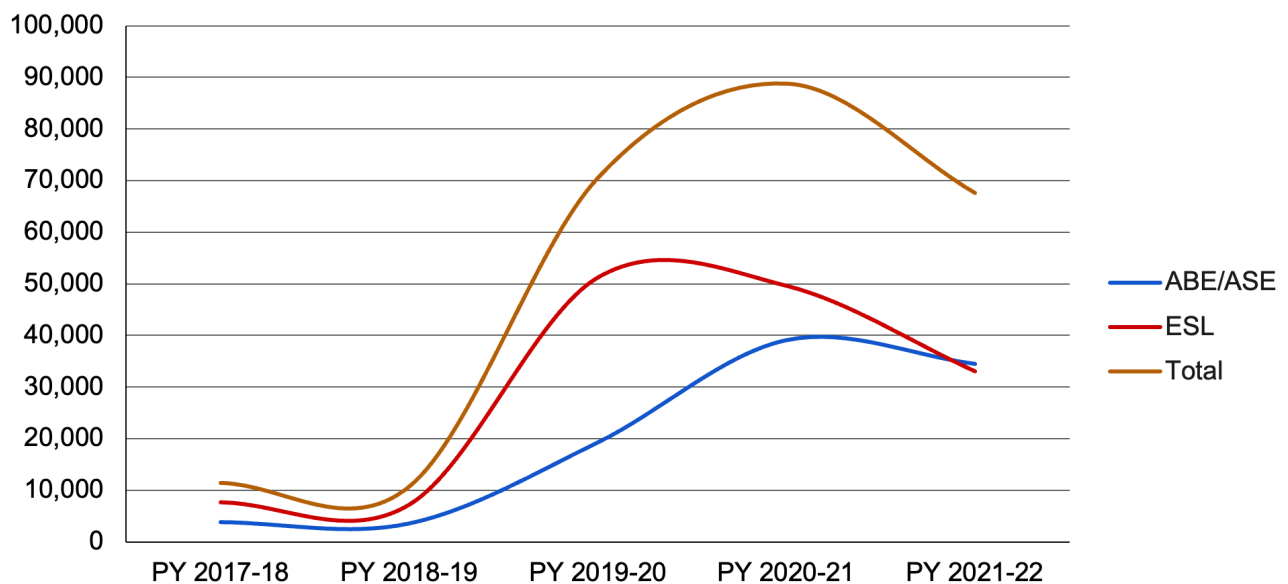
REGULAR CLASSROOM VS. DISTANCE LEARNER ENROLLMENTS - DATA TABLE	PY 2017-18	PY 2018-19	PY 2019-20	PY 2020-21	PY 2021-22
Regular Classroom	307,478	299,720	258,201	134,492	185,371
Distance Learning	11,468	10,754	70,483	88,749	67,588

Figure 1. WIOA, Title II Adult Education Enrollments from PY 2017–18 to PY 2021–22 for Regular Classroom vs. Distance Learner Enrollments Qualifying for NRS Tables 4 and 4C. (Source: CASAS 2022)

Distance Learning Enrollments

Due to federal requirements through first WIA II and then WIOA II funding, provider agencies have been required to report program information to the federal government following the National Reporting System (NRS) guidelines. In program years reported on in previous Technology and Distance Learning Plan Updates, the diminishing enrollment of distance learning students through PY 2018–19 was reported owing to a possible lack of complete reporting of distance learning students. The Figure 2 chart and table show the enrollment of distance learning students for ABE/ASE and ESL in each program year since PY 2017–18, indicating a steep increase to 70,483 in PY 2019–20 and 88,749 distance learners in PY 2020–21. In PY 2021–22, there was a notable decrease to 67,588 distance learners just below the enrollment level of the Program Year in which the COVID-19 pandemic began but still six times the enrollment of prior years.

Program Area Enrollment for Distance Learners



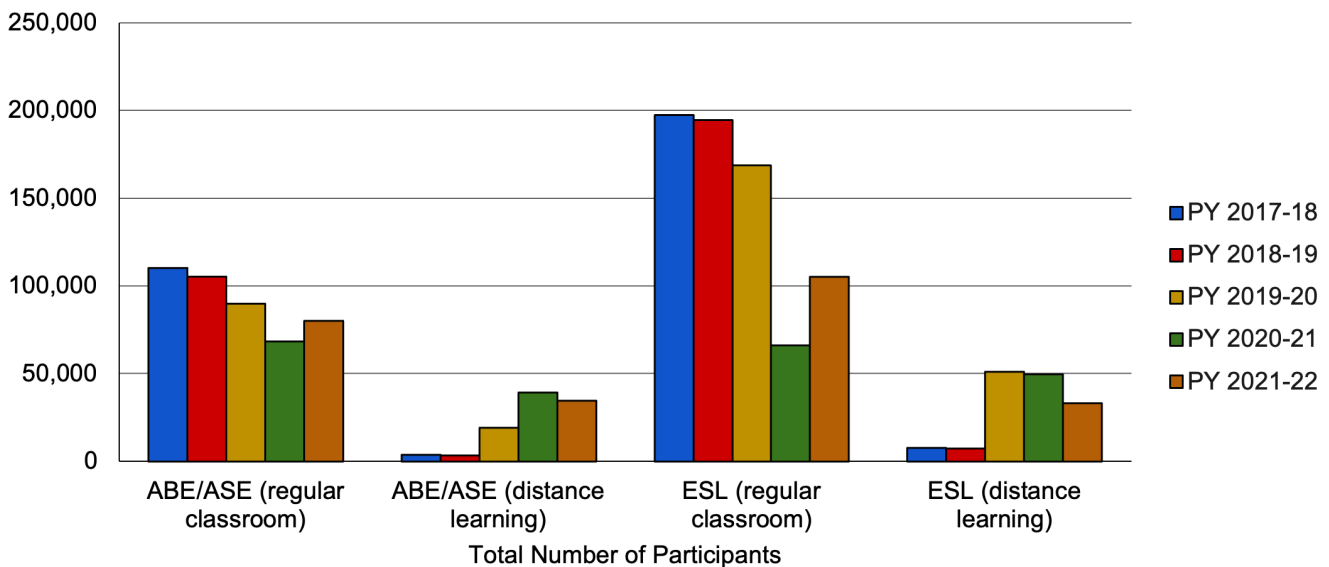
PROGRAM AREA ENROLLMENT FOR DISTANCE LEARNERS - DATA TABLE	PY 2017-18	PY 2018-19	PY 2019-20	PY 2020-21	PY 2021-22
ABE/ASE	3,766	3,512	19,247	39,109	34,510
ESL	7,702	7,242	51,236	49,640	33,078
Total	11,468	10,754	70,483	88,749	67,588

Figure 2. WIOA, Title II Adult Education Enrollments in ABE/ASE and ESL from PY 2017–18 to PY 2021–22 for Distance Learner Enrollments Qualifying for NRS Table 4C. (Source: CASAS 2022)

Comparing ABE/ASE and ESL distance learners enrollment with regular classroom enrollment during the same periods, the Figure 3 chart and table below illustrate a steep decline in ESL attendance in regular classrooms, from 197,235 students in PY 2017–18 to 66,201 students in PY 2020–21, a decline of 66.4% and certainly due to the restrictions to in-person programming

during the pandemic. When these restrictions were lifted and many provider agencies returned to in-person instruction, enrollment in ESL classes increased to 105,109 in PY 2021–22. Regular classroom enrollment in ABE/ASE classes had declined by 36% over the period of four years prior to PY 2021–22 and distance learner enrollment in ABE/ASE classes had increased by 10 times and ESL classes by almost 6.5 times in the same period. While participation of ESL students decreased significantly in regular classrooms and still had a significant increase of distance learner numbers, ABE/ASE had relatively fewer losses and more gains. In PY 2021–22, distance learning student enrollment in ABE/ASE classes decreased by 12% and in ESL classes by 34.4% while there was an increase in regular classroom enrollment of 17.5% in ABE/ASE and 58.8% in ESL.

Program Area Enrollment for Regular Classroom and Distance Learning



TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS - DATA TABLE	PY 2017-18	PY 2018-19	PY 2019-20	PY 2020-21	PY 2021-22
ABE/ASE (regular classroom)	110,243	105,204	89,668	68,291	80,262
ABE/ASE (distance learning)	3,766	3,512	19,247	39,109	34,510
ESL (regular classroom)	197,235	194,516	168,533	66,201	105,109
ESL (distance learning)	7,702	7,242	51,236	49,640	33,078

Figure 3. WIOA, Title II Adult Education Enrollments in ABE/ASE and ESL from PY 2017–18 to PY 2021–22 for Regular Classroom vs. Distance Learner Enrollments Qualifying for NRS Tables 4 and 4C. (Source: CASAS 2022)

In previous Technology and Distance Learning Plan Updates, provider agencies reporting enrollment of distance learning students were few. For PY 2018–2019, only five agencies reported more than 700 distance learning students and 15 agencies reported between 100 and 700

distance learning students.¹ As the following figures illustrate, the number of agencies reporting more distance learning students in both categories has grown. Figure 4 shows the categories within which the agencies identifying distance learning enrollments in their adult schools fall. See Appendix B for a detailed list of all adult schools with more than 700 distance students and between 100 and 700 distance learning students for PY 2021–22, PY 2020–21, PY 2019–20, and PY 2018–19.


ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS	% 21-22	N 21-22	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	58.8%	39,735	64.9%	57,595	67.3%	47,411	48.3%	5,192
Adult Schools with >100 and <700	37.7%	25,501	32.7%	29,020	30.8%	21,671	39.3%	4,228
Adult Schools with < 100 learners	3.5%	2,352	2.4%	2,134	2.0%	1,401	12.4%	1,334
Total of Identified DL Enrollments	100.0%	67,588	100.0%	88,749	100.0%	70,483	100.0%	10,754

Figure 4. Overview of enrollment at adult schools with > 700, 100-700, and < 100 distance learning students for the program years 2021–22, 2020–21, 2019–20, and 2018–2019. Federal NRS Report. (Source: CASAS 2022)

The total distance learning student enrollment was 67,588 for PY 2021–22, 88,749 for PY 2020–21, 70,483 for PY 2019–20, and 10,754 for PY 2018–19. Adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students had a reduced share of the total number of learners with 58.8% for PY 2021–22, compared with 64.9% for PY 2020–21, 67.3% for PY 2019–20, and 48.3% for PY 2018–19. Adult schools with between 100 and 700 distance learning students had an increased share from the previous year of 37.7% for PY 2021–22, compared with 32.7% for PY 2020–21, 30.8% for PY 2019–20, and 39.3% for PY 2018–19. And adult schools with less than 100 distance learning students also had an increased share from the previous year of 3.5% for PY 2021–22, compared with 2.4% for PY 2020–21, 2% for PY 2019–20, and 12.4% for PY 2018–19.

Students and Technology for Distance Learning

In Program Year 2021–22, statewide results from the Student Technology Intake Survey were available for the first time for an entire program year. The survey was launched in the previous year in September 2020 as a new instrument² that supports agencies in sharing learner data with legislators, Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), and other adult education partners. Agencies are encouraged to have most learners complete the survey at least once a year,

1 See Appendix F: WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning Plan Update for Program Year 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 in Annual Report (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020) at <https://otan.us/about-us/reports/> 

2 For online access to the survey visit <https://caladulthood.org/StudentTechnologyIntakeSurvey> 

surveying students in one program area, students in several areas, or all students. The purpose of the survey is to gather data related to student access and distance learning barriers. Agency-specific and student-level data is only shared with agencies to inform program development, identify gaps in digital access, and understand how students use technology in their daily lives.³

Many agencies’ outreach and promotion activities have taken advantage of technology to reach prospective students since the beginning of the pandemic. In PY 2021–22, as Figure 5 shows, 27.7% of students participating in the survey heard about the adult school via a website, but word of mouth still prevailed as 67.4% were told about it by family or a friend (and similar to the previous year). As noted in last year’s report, including questions about the role of social media with respect to outreach and promotion purposes on the one hand and for ongoing communication and follow-up with students on the other may be a useful addition to the Student Technology Intake Survey.

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT OUR SCHOOL?		TOTAL 21-22	% 21-22	TOTAL 20-21	% 20-21
Family or Friend	Yes	18,644	67.4%	14,472	62.9%
	No	9,014	32.6%	8,554	37.1%
Website	Yes	7,657	27.7%	6,826	29.6%
	No	20,001	72.3%	16,200	70.4%
Advertisement	Yes	2,017	7.3%	1,781	7.7%
	No	25,641	92.7%	21,245	92.3%
Catalog	Yes	1,238	4.5%	1,632	7.1%
	No	26,420	95.5%	21,394	92.9%

Figure 5. Promotion and outreach of adult school programs. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2021–22 and 2020–21 (Source: OTAN 2022 and 2021)

Digital Devices and Connectivity

As adult education agencies encourage adults to participate in their programs, the *Digital Learning Guidance* notes that “A prerequisite to engaging in digital learning is ensuring digital equity, including access to digital devices, connectivity to high-speed internet, and developing digital literacy skills.”⁴ The *Digital Learning Guidance* also suggests ways to gather information from learners to better understand their needs related to access, including surveys, outreach practices, and relationship building. Taken together, this data can provide insight into what devices, connectivity, and digital skills students have or don’t and where an adult education agency can work to ensure digital equity and access for all learners.

3 California Department of Education Adult Education Office. Continuous Improvement Plan. Program Year: 2021–22, p. 4-5

4 Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN). California Adult Education Digital Learning Guidance, p. 30. <https://otan.us/Resources/DigitalLearningGuidance> 

Some of the key questions of the Student Technology Intake Survey ask about devices and Internet connectivity in the context of digital learning. We know from research done by other organizations that almost every American has a cell phone. In our survey, roughly the same number (95%) as in the previous PY (95.7%) said that their cell phone is a smartphone (see Figure 6).

IS YOUR CELL PHONE A SMARTPHONE?		TOTAL 21-22	% 21-22	TOTAL 20-21	% 20-21
	Yes	26,272	95.0%	22,038	95.7%
	No	1,386	5.0%	988	4.3%

Figure 6. *Students' access to smartphones. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2021–22 and 2020–21 (Source: OTAN 2022 and 2021)*

And when asked how they connected to the internet, Figure 7 illustrates that fewer students (76.8%) used a connection at home than last year (86.9%). In PY 2021–22, more than a third (35.8%) used their phone to get online, compared to only a quarter (22.6%) in PY 2020–21.

HOW DO YOU CONNECT TO THE INTERNET?		TOTAL 21-22	% 21-22	TOTAL 20-21	% 20-21
Wifi/Internet connection in my home	Yes	21,236	76.8%	20,014	86.9%
	No	6,422	23.2%	3,012	13.1%
Through my phone	Yes	9,913	35.8%	5,204	22.6%
	No	17,745	64.2%	17,822	77.4%
Personal Hotspot	Yes	1,535	5.5%	1,337	5.8%
	No	26,123	94.5%	21,689	94.2%
WiFi in the community	Yes	1,205	4.4%	718	3.1%
	No	26,453	95.6%	22,308	96.9%

Figure 7. *Students' ways to connect to the internet. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2021–22 and 2020–21 (Source: OTAN 2022 and 2021)*

As Figure 8 shows, there are also data limits that kept 19.4% of respondents from learning in PY 2021–22, compared to 20.8% in the previous year. Although a slight improvement, not being able to use a device and connect to the Internet at home as needed means limited access to educational opportunities, especially when access to in-person services at adult schools and places with public Internet connections is limited during an event like a pandemic or with lingering restrictions in place with not all locations publicly accessible.

DO YOU HAVE DATA LIMITS AT HOME OR ON YOUR PHONE THAT WOULD KEEP YOU FROM LEARNING?	TOTAL 21-22	% 21-22	TOTAL 20-21	% 20-21
Yes	5,377	19.4%	4,781	20.8%
No	15,286	55.3%	13,185	57.3%
I don't know	6,995	25.3%	5,060	22.0%

Figure 8. Students' data limits as barriers to online learning. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2021–22 and 2020–21 (Source: OTAN 2022 and 2021)

These findings suggest that there is an increasing lack of access to the internet from home for some students and an increasing reliance on mobile devices as the main source of connection. This underlines the importance of mobile devices for access and a need to design for mobile learning. Bring-Your-Own-Device (BYOD) policies at adult schools and free public wifi in the communities they serve would provide more seamless opportunities of connection.

Online Learning

When asked if they had ever taken an online class before, 54.8% said that they had as shown in Figure 9 below, compared to 71% in the previous year.

HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN A CLASS ONLINE?	TOTAL 21-22	% 21-22	TOTAL 20-21	% 20-21
Yes	15,145	54.8%	16,352	71.0%
No	12,513	45.2%	6,674	29.0%

Figure 9. Students having taken online classes before. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2021–22 and 2020–21 (Source: OTAN 2022 and 2021)

Similarly, as Figure 10 illustrates, 63.1% said that they wanted to continue learning online, compared to 93.9% in the previous year. This is an encouraging sign compared to the previous year when very few students had an in-person option for learning available. It also suggests that online learning was a generally positive experience for students during the pandemic and these learners would like to have this option available in the future.

WHAT IS YOUR FEELING ABOUT LEARNING ONLINE?	TOTAL 21-22	% 21-22	TOTAL 20-21	% 20-21
I will continue to learn online.	17,449	63.1%	21,618	93.9%
I don't think I can learn online right now.	10,209	36.9%	1,408	6.1%

Figure 10. Students' feelings about online learning. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2021–22 and 2020–21 (Source: OTAN 2022 and 2021)

Digital Devices for Online Learning

In PY 2021–22, laptops or computers (64.3%) were still the most common choice of devices used for online learning (76% in PY 2020–21), alongside cell phones (64.1%) and tablets (19.7%). But Figure 11 also shows that there are more than four times more respondents in PY 2021–22 (4.3%) who said they did not have a device at all than the year before (1%).

WHICH DEVICE(S) DO YOU OR CAN YOU USE FOR ONLINE LEARNING? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)		TOTAL 21-22	% 21-22	TOTAL 20-21	% 20-21
Laptop or computer	Yes	17,788	64.3%	17,492	76.0%
	No	9,870	35.7%	5,534	24.0%
Cell phone	Yes	17,732	64.1%	13,174	57.2%
	No	9,926	35.9%	9,852	42.8%
Tablet	Yes	5,450	19.7%	5,382	23.4%
	No	22,208	80.3%	17,644	76.6%
None (I don't have a device)	Yes	1,205	4.3%	219	1.0%
	No	26,457	95.7%	22,807	99.0%

Figure 11. Students' use of devices for online learning. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2021–22 and 2020–21 (Source: OTAN 2022 and 2021)

Online Learning Challenges

As we learned during the pandemic and the switch to online learning, adult education students need a set of digital skills and optimal conditions to be successful learners. One common challenge is that a significant amount of students have to share the device they use for learning online, likely with another member of their household. Figure 12 shows that 33.7% of survey respondents reported that they had to share their device in PY 2021–22, compared to 39.4% in the previous year. These findings are significant in that one third of students may not be able to choose when they can learn online and likely cannot participate in synchronous online offerings that require them to be present online at a specific time. For some students, having to rely on asynchronous independent study may mean decreased learning progress, possibly resulting in less student persistence, due to a lack of opportunity to connect with other students in their classes.

DO YOU SHARE THIS COMPUTER, LAPTOP, OR OTHER DEVICE WITH OTHERS AT HOME?		TOTAL 21-22	% 21-22	TOTAL 20-21	% 20-21
	Yes	9,311	33.7%	9,081	39.4%
	No	18,347	66.3%	13,945	60.6%

Figure 12. Students having to share devices for online learning. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2021–22 and 2020–21 (Source: OTAN 2022 and 2021)

Similarly, another common challenge is having a quiet place to study at home. Figure 13 shows that 15.7% did not have a quiet place to study in PY 2021–22, compared to 12.6% in the previous

year. This trend is particularly significant as some schools returned to in-person instruction, which should have alleviated stresses on households during the pandemic like school age children being forced to study at home rather than at their school locations.

DO YOU HAVE A QUIET PLACE TO STUDY AT HOME?	TOTAL 21-22	% 21-22	TOTAL 20-21	% 20-21
Yes	23,306	84.3%	20,114	87.4%
No	4,352	15.7%	2,912	12.6%

Figure 13. *Students' study space for online learning. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2021–22 and 2020–21 (Source: OTAN 2022 and 2021)*

Email usage is commonly used as one indicator of a person's digital access and ability. When looking specifically at students' access to email and a smartphone and how they connect, the Student Technology Intake Survey reveals that 34.4% of students did not use email at home or at school (Figure 14), compared to 21.9% in the previous year. However, the findings of the survey do not differentiate if students did not have access to email or if they lacked the ability to use email, but the question assumes that the ability to use email is present or is simply concerned with using email as an outcome of students' access and ability to use email.

DO YOU USE EMAIL AT HOME OR AT SCHOOL?	TOTAL 21-22	% 21-22	TOTAL 20-21	% 20-21
Yes	18,140	65.6%	17,986	78.1%
No	9,518	34.4%	5,040	21.9%

Figure 14. *Students' use of email at home. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2021–22 and 2020–21 (Source: OTAN 2022 and 2021)*

Online Learning Supports

When asked about what would help learners to study online, 41.2% said flexible study times. Also, 27.3% said a device to study online, 24.8% said assistance with getting into online textbooks or classes, 15.1% said technical troubleshooting, and 14.1% said that a mobile hotspot to get on the Internet would be helpful. Figure 15 also shows that these needs increased by between one and six percentage points compared to the previous PY (35.1%, 25.1%, 21.1%, 14.4%, and 12.4%).

PLEASE MARK THE ITEMS BELOW THAT WOULD HELP YOU TO STUDY ONLINE. (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)		TOTAL 21-22	% 21-22	TOTAL 20-21	% 20-21
Flexible study times	Yes	11,388	41.2%	8,089	35.1%
	No	16,270	58.8%	14,937	64.9%
A device to help me study online	Yes	7,562	27.3%	5,778	25.1%
	No	20,096	72.7%	17,248	74.9%
Help getting into my online textbooks and/or classes	Yes	6,870	24.8%	4,847	21.1%
	No	20,788	75.2%	18,179	78.9%
Technical help fixing or using online stuff	Yes	4,182	15.1%	3,311	14.4%
	No	23,476	84.9%	19,715	85.6%
Help to get on the Internet like a mobile hotspot	Yes	3,894	14.1%	2,864	12.4%
	No	23,764	85.9%	20,162	87.6%

Figure 15. Students' online learning needs. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2021–22 and 2020–21 (Source: OTAN 2022 and 2021)

Teachers and Technology for Distance Learning

The *Digital Learning Guidance* asks, “What does an effective lesson look like in the digital age?”⁵ In designing lessons and classroom instruction for flexible learning experiences, a number of factors must be considered, including using a technology integration model or framework to guide the use of technology in the classroom, selecting the right digital tools depending on purposes, learning goals, and outcomes, and ways to evaluate digital content, resources, and tools for pedagogical and technical usability.

Measuring teacher confidence and competencies in the classroom allows agencies to understand instructors' strengths and identify where they need additional support. The Teacher Self-Assessment must be completed by at least 25% of teachers in each agency as part of the annual CIP.⁶ The purpose of this short survey is to understand the technology skills, knowledge, needs of teachers with respect to the general technology use in education, specific technology uses in the classroom, opinions and attitudes on technology integration, and areas of technical needs and improvement.

The *Digital Learning Guidance* also notes, “Regardless of modality, programs that implement models for digital learning need to include basic digital literacy skills development for...educators. In addition to basic digital literacy skills, educators need professional development in effective

5 Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN). California Adult Education Digital Learning Guidance, p. 67. <https://otan.us/Resources/DigitalLearningGuidance> 

6 California Department of Education Adult Education Office. Continuous Improvement Plan. Program Year: 2021–22, p. 5

technology integration.”⁷ As an agency develops its CIP, OTAN provides training to support the application and integration of technology into the classroom and program development in blended and distance learning practices. For example, agencies can participate in the two-year Digital Leadership Academy (DLAC), take training through online webinars, face-to-face classes, and online courses, and receive referrals to specific resources that would most benefit program goals.⁸

General Technology Use in Education

In the Technology and Distance Learning Updates prior to PY 2020–21, OTAN reported on teacher self-assessments of their technology skills and their perceived value for instruction based on the ISTE Standards for Teachers to help improve future professional development opportunities through local agencies as well as for services available through the three state leadership projects (OTAN, CASAS, CALPRO). The section on General technology use in education in the Teacher Self-Assessment employs a similar approach, asking teachers to rate their skills and the importance they place on various tasks. In PY 2021–22, teachers rated themselves equally strongly as in PY 2020–21 with respect to Integrating technology into daily instruction (65.1%), Acting as a guide for learners when researching on the internet (61.9%), and Using technology to manage/organize their work (61.8%). When asked about the importance placed on tasks, they rated Integrating technology into daily instruction (71.3%), Using technology to manage/organize my work (69.0%), and Troubleshooting problems that occur when using technology during and for instruction (68.2%) highest (see chart and table in Figure 16).

7 Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN). California Adult Education Digital Learning Guidance, p. 61. <https://otan.us/Resources/DigitalLearningGuidance> 

8 California Department of Education Adult Education Office. Continuous Improvement Plan. Program Year: 2021–22, p. 14

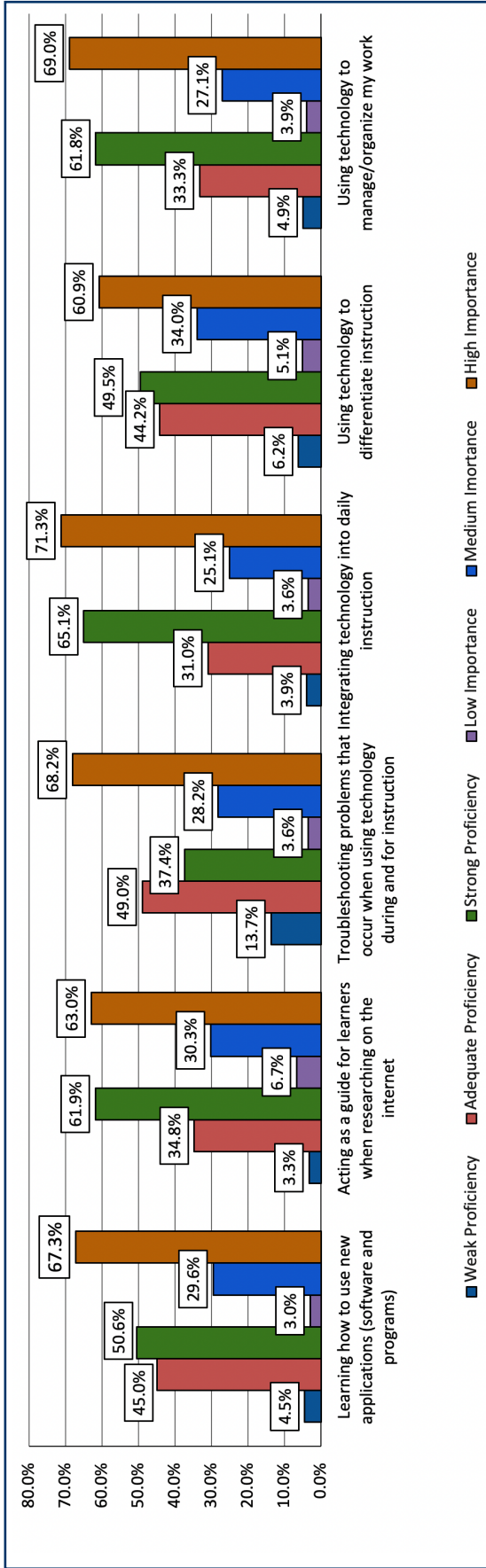


Figure 16. General Technology Use in Education. CIP Teacher Assessment Survey Results from PY 2021–22 (Source: OTAN 2022)

To determine areas where professional development activities may have the most impact and assist agencies in the planning of training activities, the following Figure 17 illustrates areas of weak proficiency and high importance for teaching. Areas with high percentages in both are areas where teachers feel they need professional development most to use technology for education, such as Troubleshooting problems that occur when using technology during and for instruction (13.7% Weak Proficiency and 68.2% High Importance), which tops the list.

AREAS OF WEAK PROFICIENCY AND HIGH IMPORTANCE TO TEACHING	WEAK PROFICIENCY	HIGH IMPORTANCE
Learning how to use new applications (software and programs)	4.5%	67.3%
Acting as a guide for learners when researching on the internet	3.3%	63.0%
Troubleshooting problems that occur when using technology during and for instruction	13.7%	68.2%
Integrating technology into daily instruction	3.9%	71.3%
Using technology to differentiate instruction	6.2%	60.9%
Using technology to manage/organize my work	4.9%	69.0%

Figure 17. Areas of Weak Proficiency and High Importance to Teaching. General Technology Use in Education. CIP Teacher Assessment Survey Results from PY 2021–22 (Source: OTAN 2022)

Specific Technology Use in the Classroom

The use of specific technologies for teaching and learning may vary greatly by the frequency with which they are used. Teachers were asked to rate descriptions of technology uses based on the amount of time they spent working with them. Figure 18 illustrates that, in PY 2021–22, 73.9% (84% in PY 2020–21) responded that Computers in all environments (classroom, remote teaching) were used daily, and 47.7% (57.6%) said the same about Mobile devices (primarily smartphones or feature phones) as did 51.6% (57.3%) about Internet resources for developing lesson plans / ideas (websites, extensions, search tools like Google, Bing). The decrease of 6-10 percentage points is notable. More than last year (67% compared to 62.5%) also reported that they never used Assistive Technology hardware (puff sticks, special mouse, large key keyboards, communication boards) and almost the same number of respondents (54.7% compared to 55%) never used Assistive Technology Tools (screen readers, magnifiers, JAWS, Immersive Reader, NVDA). Given the return to in-person instruction at many adult schools, these developments are not surprising; however, they are of concern when considering the advantages of multimodal program delivery and using assistive technologies.

SPECIFIC TECHNOLOGY USE IN THE CLASSROOM	NEVER	YEARLY	MONTHLY	WEEKLY	DAILY
Applications and Internet	%	%	%	%	%
Internet resources for developing lesson plans / ideas (websites, extensions, search tools like Google, Bing)	2.4%	2.8%	10.3%	33.0%	51.6%
Apps for tablets / mobile devices	18.8%	9.0%	19.8%	24.7%	27.7%
Assistive Technology Tools (screen readers, magnifiers, JAWS, Immersive Reader, NVDA)	54.7%	14.2%	13.7%	9.7%	7.7%
Test Preparation (I.E. HSE, Certifications, etc.)	32.0%	16.1%	21.2%	16.6%	14.2%
Assessment (formative, summative, check for understanding, EL Civics Assessments)	11.5%	7.6%	26.8%	31.7%	22.4%
Virtual Classroom Design (Website, Learning Management System / LMS, Blogs, etc.)	25.1%	9.9%	13.5%	18.2%	33.2%
Management programs for student data (I.E. Tops Enterprise Reports, Student Information System, and Launchboard)	25.2%	10.5%	19.5%	20.4%	24.4%
Hardware	%	%	%	%	%
Computer in all environments (classroom, remote teaching)	4.7%	2.8%	4.6%	13.9%	73.9%
Active Board (e.g., White Board, SMART board, smart/touch TV's)	36.1%	5.9%	7.8%	14.4%	35.8%
Mobile devices (primarily smartphones or feature phones)	17.6%	4.5%	10.4%	19.8%	47.7%
Tablets (e.g., iPads, Microsoft Surface)	40.9%	7.7%	12.0%	16.4%	23.0%
Digital video cameras (digital display, projectors, presentation devices, and document cameras)	21.1%	6.8%	10.3%	18.1%	43.7%
Assistive Technology hardware (puff sticks, special mouse, large key keyboards, communication boards)	67.0%	10.0%	6.2%	6.4%	10.4%

Figure 18. *Specific Technology Use in the Classroom. CIP Teacher Assessment Survey Results from PY 2021–22 (Source: OTAN 2022)*

Opinions and Attitudes on Technology Integration

The role of technology integration in education continues to be a topic of debate, not only because of the recent pandemic when many adult schools, teachers, and students were thrust into remote teaching and learning. The Teacher Self-Assessment emphasizes a recognition that the curriculum and not technology by itself drives the use of technology. Technology integration is the use of technology tools in general content areas in education to allow students to apply

computer and technology skills to learning and problem-solving.⁹ The opinions and attitudes on technology integration of teachers are important factors when creating and employing curriculum.

There was comparatively little change comparing the findings in most categories shown in Figure 19 below with the previous year. In PY 2021–22, 87.8% (84.9% in PY 2020–21) agreed or strongly agreed that learners created products that showed higher levels of learning. When asked if they thought technology had changed their teaching, 92.2% (94.3%) agreed or strongly agreed that it had and 76.2% (76.1%) thought that most technology would improve their ability to teach. In addition, 93.6% (93.3%) agreed or strongly agreed that they thought technology was a good tool for collaboration with other teachers. As well, 71.9% (74.4%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that they thought learners were more knowledgeable than they were when it came to technology and 74.9% (72.7%) did not think that technology was unreliable. Still 55.8% (56.8%) strongly agreed or agreed that they were expected to learn new technologies without formal training. But 4.9% fewer teachers (53.1% compared to 58%) agreed or strongly agreed that there was too much technological change coming too fast without enough support for teachers, and 86.2% (81.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that learners were more motivated when using the Internet. This may indicate an increasing acceptance of the use of technologies.

OPINIONS AND ATTITUDES ON TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
When using the internet...	%	%	%	%
Learners create products that show higher levels of learning	29.2%	58.6%	10.2%	2.0%
Learners are more motivated	29.6%	56.4%	12.2%	1.8%
Learners are often distracted when online (ads, personal emails, and social media)	16.9%	45.7%	32.7%	4.8%
There is more learner collaboration	16.4%	51.1%	29.1%	3.4%
Plagiarism is a problem	17.5%	40.6%	34.4%	7.4%
There are too many unreliable sources	15.4%	45.0%	35.2%	4.4%
I think...	%	%	%	%
Electronic media will replace printed text within five years	18.7%	35.7%	37.6%	8.0%
Most technology would improve my ability to teach	24.6%	51.6%	20.5%	3.2%
Technology has changed the way that I teach	43.9%	48.3%	6.1%	1.6%
Learners are more knowledgeable than I am when it comes to technology	6.9%	21.2%	53.4%	18.5%
There is too much technological change coming too fast without enough support for teachers	15.6%	37.5%	39.7%	7.2%
Technology is a good tool for collaboration with other teachers	35.3%	58.3%	5.0%	1.3%
Technology is unreliable	3.6%	21.5%	58.3%	16.6%

Figure 19. *Opinion and Attitudes on Technology Integration. CIP Teacher Assessment Survey Results from PY 2021–22 (Source: OTAN 2022)*

Areas of Technical Needs and Improvement

Teachers were also asked about the technology support they received and additional technology support they may need in instructional settings to assist with setting priorities for professional development, resources, and infrastructure to support technology integration. Figure 20 shows that 51.4% reported in PY 2021–22 (compared to 44% in PY 2020–21) that they did not receive help aligning the integration of technology with the implementation of standards, for instance, College and Career Readiness and / or English Language Proficiency Standards. Also, more respondents (42.7% compared to 33.7%) reported that they did not receive many opportunities to collaborate with colleagues on how to use technology or sufficient access to technology tools and resources to integrate into instruction, such as software, paid subscriptions for tools like Quizlet and Kahoot, and a learning management system (33.2% compared to 30.6%), or they just didn't have enough time to integrate technology into their curriculum (32.4% compared to 30.1%). When asked if they received or took technology training when offered by their agency, 90.4% said that they did compared to 92.7% in the previous year. While 82.3% (84.2%) said they had fast internet access or access to it, 78.4% (81.8%) said that they had received enough technical support from their administration to keep computers and applications running with assigned technical support from the district, school, or volunteers. These findings suggest there was less emphasis placed on meeting the needs of teachers with respect to technological aspects of instruction, support, and professional development.

AREAS OF TECHNICAL NEEDS AND IMPROVEMENT - TEACHER SUPPORTS	YES	NO
1a I have received or taken technology training when offered by my agency	90.4%	9.6%
2a I have enough time to integrate technology into my curriculum	67.6%	32.4%
3a I receive enough technical support from my administration to keep computers and applications running (assigned technical support from district, school, volunteers etc.)	78.4%	21.6%
4a I receive sufficient access to hardware technology tools to integrate into my instruction (computers, document cameras, smart boards, etc.)	76.1%	23.9%
5a I receive sufficient access to technology tools/resources to integrate into my instruction (software: paid subscriptions for tools like Quizlet, Kahoot, a learning management system, etc.)	66.8%	33.2%
6a I have fast internet, or access to fast internet	82.3%	17.7%
7a I receive many opportunities to collaborate with colleagues on how to use technology	57.3%	42.7%
8a I receive many options for professional development in the areas of technology	62.2%	37.8%
9a I receive help aligning the integration of technology with the implementation of standards (I.E. College and Career Readiness and / or English Language Proficiency State Standards)	48.6%	51.4%

Figure 20. *Areas of Technical Needs and Improvement - Teacher Supports. CIP Teacher Assessment Survey Results from PY 2021–22 (Source: OTAN 2022)*

The respondents who reported having technical needs met to some degree were also asked in which areas they needed more improvements. Figure 21 illustrates that fewer teachers indicated that they needed more time, access, or support than the year before. More than half agreed or strongly agreed that they needed more time to learn to use applications (58.8% in PY 2021–22 compared to 62.4% in PY 2020–21). A third indicated that they needed more time to integrate technology into the curriculum (33.2% compared to 36%). Fewer teachers than in the previous year said that they needed more options for professional development in the areas of technology (28.4% compared to 36.2%) and that they needed more technical support to keep computers and applications running through assigned technical support (29.4% compared to 33.1%). The remaining percentage points balance for each statement represents survey respondents who chose not to indicate if they agreed or disagreed with a statement.

AREAS OF TECHNICAL NEEDS AND IMPROVEMENT - TEACHER NEEDS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1b I need more time to learn to use applications	16.8%	42.0%	26.8%	4.8%
2b I need more time to integrate technology into my curriculum (ABE, ASE, ESL, math, GED, diploma, etc.)	6.5%	26.7%	29.2%	5.1%
3b I need more technical support to keep computers and applications running (assigned technical support from district, school, volunteers etc.)	5.6%	23.8%	41.8%	7.3%
4b I need more access to hardware technology tools to integrate into my instruction (computers, document cameras, smart boards, etc.)	5.0%	19.0%	43.7%	8.5%
5b I need more access to technology tools / resources to integrate into my instruction (software: paid subscriptions for Quizlet, Kahoot, a Learning management system / LMS, etc.)	5.8%	19.5%	35.3%	6.2%
6b I need faster access to the internet or access to fast internet	9.0%	18.8%	43.1%	11.4%
7b I need more opportunities to collaborate with colleagues on how to use technology	5.2%	21.0%	25.9%	5.2%
8b I need more options for professional development in the areas of technology	6.1%	22.3%	28.0%	5.7%
9b I need more help aligning the integration of technology with the implementation of standards (I.E. College and Career Readiness and / or English Language Proficiency Standards)	4.3%	17.4%	23.0%	4.0%

Figure 21. Areas of Technical Needs and Improvement - Teacher Needs. CIP Teacher Assessment Survey Results from PY 2021–22 (Source: OTAN 2022)

Program Implementation and Distance Learning

This section reviews results related to blended and distance learning from the California WIOA, Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Program Implementation Survey for the PY 2021–22, in the following areas: distance learning classes, distance learning barriers, professional development priorities, student persistence, and waiting lists. The AEFLA Program Implementation Survey collects information pertaining to program management, student transitions to post-secondary education, training, employment, budget issues, coordination, planning for professional development, distance learning, and English Literacy & Civics Section 231 and 243 programs. The Survey had been modified to reflect the impact of COVID-19 on the WIOA, Title II: AEFLA program.¹⁰ This section also includes results from the WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey, an additional survey conducted by OTAN with agencies in early 2023 to provide more details about the aforementioned areas.


Distance Learning Classes

The AEFLA Program Implementation Survey results for PY 2020–21 showed that provider agencies that used an online format did so for 83.3% of their students (combined for all adult schools) from July 2020 onwards during the first full program year of the COVID-19 pandemic. In PY 2021–22, the results were divided between three different groups: adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students provided 90% of their students with online learning opportunities, those with between 100 and 700 students 85%, and schools with less than 100 distance learning students 83% as shown in Figure 22.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR STUDENTS HAD ACCESS TO A DISTANCE LEARNING FORMAT?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
	90%	85%	83%

Figure 22. *Students Accessing Distance Learning. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2021–22 (Source: CASAS 2022)*

Figure 23 shows that among classes offered in a remote or hybrid/HyFlex format, 79% and 70% were offered online the most in adult schools with more than 700 and those with between 100 and 700 distance learners respectively. In adult schools with less than 100 distance learning students IELCE/IET (Integrated EL Civics/Integrated Education & Training) classes were offered most (68%) online. In the previous program year, ESL classes (89.8%), ASE (84.4%), and ABE (79.6%) classes were most commonly provided in a remote learning format and only 40.4% of IELCE/IET classes were offered online in all adult schools with distance learners combined.

10 For more info on the California WIOA, Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Program Implementation Survey for the PY 2021–22 visit <https://www.casas.org/training-and-support/casas-peer-communities/california-adult-education-accountability-and-assessment/ca-wioa-survey> 

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR CLASSES ARE OFFERED IN A REMOTE OR HYBRID/HYFLEX FORMAT?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
ABE	66%	67%	62%
ASE	79%	70%	61%
ESL	50%	47%	52%
IELCE/IET	47%	67%	68%
CTE	52%	51%	53%
Other	50%	20%	0%

Figure 23. Hybrid/Hyflex Classes. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2021–22 (Source: CASAS 2022)

In the WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey, agencies were asked if their use of blended distance learning was due to administrative support and/or if teachers were the driving force. Overall, in adult schools with more than 700 and between 100 and 700 distance learners, administrative support and teacher-led initiative went hand-in-hand the most (66.7% and 83.7% respectively), but also more than two thirds of schools with less than 100 distance learning students (69.6%) were able to rely on both the administration and teachers as driving forces of blended distance learning.

Figure 24 also shows that, for adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students, it was most common that the use of blended distance learning was mainly due to administrative support (11.1%). That is more than in adult schools with 100-700 distance learning students (6.1%) and those with less than 100 distance learning students (4.3%). Teachers were the main driving force in about a quarter of both adult schools with more than 700 (22.2%) and less than 100 (26.1%) distance learning students, but less than half of that in schools with a medium distance learning student enrollment (10.2%).

WAS BLENDED DISTANCE LEARNING SUPPORTED BY ADMINISTRATION AND/OR TEACHER-LED?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Admin supported	11.1%	6.1%	4.3%
Teacher-led	22.2%	10.2%	26.1%
Both	66.7%	83.7%	69.6%

Figure 24. Blended Distance Learning Admin Support and/or Teacher-led. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)

When asked if students and teachers were interested in blended distance learning, the majority of agencies indicated that they were - adult schools with between 100 and 700 distance learning students were the highest at 95.3%, those with more than 700 students were at 92.9%, and those with less than 100 distance learning students were at 86.4% (Figure 25). One respondent

further explained: “Students largely support distance learning, and we will remain a 95% distance learning institution as we move forward and consider how we can best meet the ever-changing needs of our students.”

WERE THE STUDENTS AND TEACHERS INTERESTED IN BLENDED DISTANCE LEARNING?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	92.9%	95.3%	86.4%
No	7.1%	4.7%	13.6%

Figure 25. *Blended Distance Learning Student and Teacher Interest. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)*

When agencies were asked if student enrollment and retention numbers had been affected by their return to in-person instruction, 50% of adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students, 47.6% of schools with medium distance learning enrollment, and 40.9% of those with less than 100 distance learning students agreed (Figure 26). Presumably, the reason why the return to in-person instruction affected the latter less was that these schools had maintained more in-person classes throughout the pandemic when possible.

For the schools who were more affected, one respondent explained: “One of the main reasons why the numbers have not returned to the pre-pandemic enrollment numbers is because people have relocated and others are afraid to return to instruction, therefore we offer online instruction now; we have to make sure students are informed and flexible to take these classes.”

HAVE STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION NUMBERS BEEN AFFECTED BY YOUR AGENCY’S RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	50.0%	47.6%	40.9%
No	50.0%	52.4%	59.1%

Figure 26. *Return to In-person Instruction Effect on Student Enrollment and Retention. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)*

Agencies were also asked to indicate if efforts were made specifically to offer HyFlex classes. As Figure 27 shows, more than half agreed in adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students (57.1%) and in those with 100-700 distance learning students (53.5%). However, less than a third said they made efforts to offer HyFlex classes in schools with less than 100 distance learning students.

WERE THERE EFFORTS FOR ANY HYFLEX OFFERINGS (SIMULTANEOUS IN-PERSON AND REMOTE INSTRUCTION)?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	57.1%	53.5%	30.4%
No	42.9%	46.5%	59.1%

Figure 27. Hyflex Offering Efforts. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)

When asked if they considered HyFlex a medium to strong need and if training was needed, almost nine out of ten (88.9%) respondents from adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students agreed while only a bit more than half (54.2%) of those from schools with 100-700 distance learning student enrollment did. But more than two thirds (66.7%) of respondents from adult schools with less than 100 distance learning students said they need more HyFlex offerings and professional development to support it (Figure 28).

DO YOU CONSIDER HYFLEX A MEDIUM TO STRONG NEED, AND WOULD YOU EMBRACE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AROUND IT?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	88.9%	54.2%	66.7%
No	11.1%	45.8%	33.3%

Figure 28. Need for Hyflex Instruction and Related Training. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)

Several respondents to the WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey shared their thoughts about HyFlex and hybrid formats:

- “We believe HyFlex is the best model because some students need in-person classes and others cannot make them work, so having both options has helped us build back our attendance. We also improved our persistence rate.”
- “Our school looks forward to being effective and meeting the needs of our students. Throughout 2020–22 we have learned a lot about flexibility in education. The accountability measures for funding allocation have remained consistent even if enrollment has gone down. We have to take a closer look at program growth to include new offerings.”
- “[Our school] remains committed to offering virtual learning options for those students who chose to learn that way. That being said, our virtual options are currently our greatest opportunity for growth and improvement.”
- “Hyflex and hybrid have a place in our agency; however, we do not believe there is greater need at this moment. We are offering in-person classes only in ESL. 90% in person in CTE, and Academic is half and half. Of course if there is another health emergency we are ready to adjust our instruction to meet our students' needs.”

Distance Learning Barriers

In the three program years before the start of the pandemic, the results showed that barriers related to the availability of technology to students at home, staffing, costs, and lack of demand had decreased.¹¹ Beginning with PY 2020–21, results have been more differentiated due to the design of the AEFLA Program Implementation Survey. As Figure 29 illustrates, the main barrier in PY 2021–22 remains the availability of technology to students at home (75% for adult school with more than 700 distance learning students, 68.6% for those with between 100 and 700, and 56.9% for schools with less than 100) but is less pronounced compared to 78.2% combined in the previous year. Difficulties associated with pre- and post-testing students also remain high (75%, 62.8%, and 51.4% respectively, compared to 75.6% combined previously) so they were still a huge barrier. Difficulties implementing (25%, 18.6%, and 25% respectively, compared to 30.2% combined previously) and maintaining (12.5%, 14%, and 22.2% respectively, compared to 20.9% combined previously) blended and distance learning were also still notable barriers. Staffing (54.2%, 39.5%, and 41.7% respectively, compared to 30.2% previously) was a more notable barrier to agencies in offering remote/hybrid/HyFlex learning than the year before while cost (25%, 20.9%, and 25% respectively, compared to 24% combined previously) remained a concern of similar importance. The lack of student demand (8.3%, 12.8%, and 22.2% respectively, compared to 25.3% combined previously) was most pronounced in adult schools with less than 100 distance learning students.

BARRIERS TO AGENCIES IN OFFERING REMOTE OR HYBRID/HYFLEX LEARNING	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Availability of technology to student at home	75.0%	68.6%	56.9%
Difficulty in pre- and post-testing students	75.0%	62.8%	51.4%
Staffing	54.2%	39.5%	41.7%
Tracking attendance/record keeping	33.3%	18.6%	20.8%
Cost	25.0%	20.9%	25.0%
Difficulty in implementing	25.0%	18.6%	25.0%
Difficulty in maintaining	12.5%	14.0%	22.2%
Availability of technology at agency	12.5%	10.5%	11.1%
Lack of student demand	8.3%	12.8%	22.2%
Lack of information about online learning programs	8.3%	7.0%	5.6%
Other	16.7%	23.3%	18.1%

Figure 29. Distance Learning Barriers. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2021–22 (Source: CASAS 2022)

The *Digital Learning Guidance* mentions some of these challenges to implementation – for example, access to devices and staffing-related issues such as professional development, digital skills training, and instructional concerns. It recommends deliberate and thoughtful steps

11 Ibid.

to plan and implement the creation of a strong infrastructure that addresses funding, professional development, technical support, time, and learner support, a collaborative approach to curriculum development and implementation, and a balance of short and long-term perspectives to implement, maintain, and grow distance learning.¹²

As current policies may be affecting or even hindering the implementation of blended distance learning options in in-person and remote instructional settings, agencies were asked about the effect of current policies at their adult schools in the WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey. As Figure 30 shows, more than three quarters of respondents from schools with more than 700 distance learning students (78.6%) and those with an enrollment of less than 100 distance learning students (81%) said that current policies were not an issue. Nine out of ten indicated the same in adult schools with a medium distance learning students enrollment (90.5%).

ARE CURRENT POLICIES HINDERING OR AFFECTING BLENDED DISTANCE LEARNING IN-PERSON OR REMOTELY?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	21.4%	9.5%	19.0%
No	78.8%	90.5%	81.0%

Figure 30. *Effect of Current Policies on Blended Distance Learning. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)*

When asked if bargaining unit restrictions or other issues prevented them to offer more HyFlex classes, only very few respondents (4.3%) in adult schools with a medium distance learning student enrollment said that they did but all respondents (100%) in schools with more than 700 distance learning students and less than 100 distance learning students said that they did not (Figure 31). One survey respondent from an adult school with medium distance learning student enrollment explained: “We are able to be flexible and offer both in-person and online courses. We are unable to offer Hyflex classes (simultaneous in-person and online) as this is not allowed by our teachers' union. Our attendance has greatly increased post-pandemic, and the continuation of online classes is a contributing factor, as we can serve more students.”

12 Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN). California Adult Education Digital Learning Guidance, p. 82-83. <https://otan.us/Resources/DigitalLearningGuidance> 

DOES YOUR AGENCY LACK THE OPTION OF TRYING HYFLEX DUE TO BARGAINING UNIT RESTRICTIONS OR OTHER ISSUES?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	0.0%	4.3%	0.0%
No	100.0%	95.7%	100.0%

Figure 31. Lack of HyFlex due to Bargaining Unit Restrictions or Other Issues. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)

When asked if there had been a shortage of teachers and/or support staff to support blended distance learning, a large majority of respondents agreed - 84.6% in adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students, 67.4% in schools with medium distance learning student enrollment, and 78.3% in schools with less than 100 distance learning students (Figure 32). One respondent added: “We would love to have more instructors, and more adequately trained instructors and staff, in distance learning and continue to grow in that area, especially HyFlex.”

HAS THERE BEEN A SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS AND/OR SUPPORT STAFF TO SUPPORT BLENDED DISTANCE LEARNING IN-PERSON AND/OR REMOTELY?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	84.6%	67.4%	78.3%
No	15.4%	32.6%	21.7%

Figure 32. Blended Distance Learning Teacher and Support Staff Shortage. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)

Blended distance learning program delivery strategies allow adult schools to respond to changing circumstances while minimizing the negative effects on staff and clients. When asked if their agency’s current delivery approach was flexible enough to respond to changing circumstances by offering blended distance learning modalities, all (100%) respondents from adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students said that it was while 97.7% from those schools with a medium distance learning student enrollment and 82.6% from schools with less than 100 distance learning students did (Figure 33).

IS YOUR AGENCY'S CURRENT DELIVERY APPROACH FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO RESPOND TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES BY OFFERING BLENDED DISTANCE LEARNING MODALITIES?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	100.0%	97.7%	82.6%
No	0.0%	2.3%	17.4%

Figure 33. *Blended Distance Learning Teacher and Support Staff Shortage. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)*

Blended distance learning program delivery strategies built into contingency plans and risk management may contribute to “future-proofing” of agencies as they navigate post-pandemic challenges. When asked if their agency’s risk strategy and contingency plan included blended distance learning, more than three quarters (78.6%) of respondents from adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students said that their agency did and even more (88.1%) did who responded on behalf of schools with a medium distance learning student enrollment as well as those from schools with less than 100 distance learning students (85%) (Figure 34).

IS BLENDED DISTANCE LEARNING CONSIDERED IN YOUR AGENCY'S RISK STRATEGY AND CONTINGENCY PLAN?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	78.6%	88.1%	85.0%
No	21.4%	11.9%	15.0%

Figure 34. *Blended Distance Learning as Risk Strategies and Contingency Plans. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)*

Online Tools and Resources

Provider agencies were also asked to identify online tools and resources that had been most helpful for remote and hybrid/HyFlex learning in PY 2021–22. These open-ended responses were filtered by adult schools with more than 700, between 100 and 700, and less than 100 or no distance learning student enrollment.

As Figure 35 illustrates, schools with the least distance learning student enrollment used Zoom (48%) and Canvas (15%) significantly less than schools with medium enrollment (76% and 34%) and schools with the highest enrollment (65% and 74%). The use of programs such as Burlington English (44% vs 30% vs 21%), Odysseyware/Edgenuity (35% vs 22% vs 18%), and Aztec (22% vs 9% vs 9%) was also highest for schools with high distance learning student enrollment and lowest for the schools with low enrollment. Similarly, the use of Google Classroom (30% vs 21% vs 16%) and the Google Suite (including Google tools like Meet, Docs, and Slides) (22% vs 9% vs 6%) was higher in schools with higher distance learning student enrollment. In schools

with the highest enrollment, Chromebooks and laptops used as student loaner devices were more common but not as significant compared with schools with fewer students; however, video conference cameras and Meeting OWLs were hardly used in schools with the lowest distance learning student enrollment.

WHAT ONLINE TOOLS AND RESOURCES WERE MOST HELPFUL FOR REMOTE AND HYBRID/HYFLEX LEARNING?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Zoom	74%	76%	48%
Canvas	65%	34%	15%
Burlington English	44%	30%	21%
Odysseyware/Edgenuity	35%	22%	18%
Google Classroom	30%	21%	16%
Google Suite	22%	9%	6%
Aztec	22%	17%	9%
Chromebooks/laptop loaners	17%	11%	10%
Video conference camera/Meeting OWL	17%	9%	1%
Quizlet	13%	3%	1%
Wifi Hotspots	13%	3%	2%
Newsela	9%	3%	2%
Nearpod	9%	1%	0%
Kahoot	9%	8%	2%
Tutorials	9%	0%	0%
WhatsApp	4%	3%	1%
Padlet	4%	5%	2%
Kami	4%	3%	0%
Edmentum	0%	3%	8%
Jamboard	0%	1%	5%

Figure 35. *Online tools and resources most helpful for remote and hybrid/HyFlex learning. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2021–22 (Source: CASAS 2022)*

One survey respondent representing a school with more than 700 distance learning students commented: “[...] Using Zoom/Google Meet and the polycameras allow teachers to have students on-campus and at home learning simultaneously. [...] Moodle, Kami and Padlet have caused greater interaction for students attending teacher-directed classes remotely.”

A respondent from a school with medium distance learning student enrollment summed up the school’s approach to remote and hybrid/hyflex instruction this way: “Technology training, OTAN field support. platforms such as Zoom and Google Meets; technology such as OWL. educational on-line resources like Edgenuity, Kami, Burlington English, Quizlet, GED.com, padlet. Also, providing hot-spots and chromebooks to students upon request.”

A respondent from a school with a less than 100 distance learning student enrollment also credited adequate technology equipment and OTAN as valuable resources: “One of the best resources for online learning is our DTEN touchscreen equipment that is set up in each classroom. This equipment is built specifically to pair with Zoom, and the audio/video quality is excellent for the learners. The second best resource is OTAN. Staff learn something new and ready-to-use during every OTAN workshop.”

Selecting digital learning tools is a crucial part of designing flexible learning experiences. Chapter 4 of the *Digital Learning Guidance* provides insight into selecting tools that address learning goals and outcomes as well as the various purposes of using tools - for example, for communication, collaboration, and learning management. There is also information on evaluating digital learning tools for both pedagogical and technical usability.

Professional Development Priorities

The AEFLA Program Implementation Survey also collects information about professional development (PD) needed by administrators and coordinators as well as instructors. Agencies are asked to indicate whether they have no need (do not need or want any professional development now), a basic need (need or want some professional development, but not of the highest priority), or an advanced need (need professional development in this area, and need to receive it soon) for each of the priorities in the current program year.

Figure 36 shows that agencies reported an advanced need for administrators and coordinators in the following areas related to blended and distance program delivery in PY 2021–22: Transitioning to remote online learning (8.3% for adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students, 9.3% for those with between 100 and 700, and 16.7% for schools with less than 100, compared to 16% combined in PY 2020–21) and Transitioning to remote testing (8.3%, 11.6%, and 16.7% respectively, compared to 17.3% combined previously).

ADVANCED NEED FOR PD FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND COORDINATORS	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Improving learner enrollment, attendance, and persistence	29.2%	36.0%	37.5%
Integrated Education and Training	29.2%	27.9%	16.7%
Using TOPSpro Enterprise data and assessment to inform instruction	25%	27.9%	25.0%
Using TOPSpro Enterprise data to manage and improve programs	25.0%	25.6%	34.7%
Student transitions to employment and career training	20.8%	32.6%	18.1%
Student counseling and wraparound services	20.8%	25.6%	19.4%
Student transitions to college and education opportunities	16.7%	25.6%	18.1%
Equity in adult education	16.7%	17.4%	15.3%
WIOA, Title II data collection requirements	12.5%	15.1%	22.2%
CAEP data collection requirements	12.5%	11.6%	16.7%
NRS goals/performance	12.5%	11.6%	16.7%
CTE/Workforce Preparation programs and instruction	8.3%	25.6%	23.6%
ESL programs and instruction, including EL Civics implementation	8.3%	15.1%	16.7%
Establishing a Professional Learning Community (PLC)	8.3%	15.1%	11.1%
Budget/fiscal issues	8.3%	14.0%	11.1%
Transitioning to remote testing	8.3%	11.6%	16.7%
Transitioning to remote online learning	8.3%	9.3%	12.5%
Managed enrollment	4.2%	5.8%	5.6%
ABE/ASE programs and instructions	0%	15.1%	11.1%
Working in collaborative teams	0%	12.8%	9.7%
Staff development and management	0%	11.6%	9.7%

Figure 36. Professional Development Priorities for Administrators and Coordinators. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2021–22 (Source: CASAS 2022)

Additionally, Figure 37 provides details about the professional development needs for instructors related to the highlighted needs for administrators and coordinators: Transitioning to remote online learning (16.7% for adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students, 7% for those with between 100 and 700, and 12.5% for schools with less than 100, compared to 15.1% combined in PY 2020–21) and Transitioning to remote testing (8.3%, 9.3%, and 8.3% respectively, compared to 17.3% combined previously). Also, more agencies (45.8%, 29.1%, and 22.2% respectively, compared to 27.6% previously) indicated that Integration of technology was an advanced professional development need. Also notable is that around a quarter of agencies need more Computer-based instructional strategies/curriculum regardless of how many distance

learning students they have (25.%, 27.9%, and 23.6% respectively in PY 2021–22, compared to 30.2% in the previous year).

ADVANCED NEED FOR PD FOR INSTRUCTORS	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Learner persistence	45.8%	41.9%	34.7%
Integration of technology	45.8%	29.1%	22.2%
Integrated Education and Training	29.2%	25.6%	20.8%
Computer-based instructional strategies/ curriculum	25.0%	27.9%	23.6%
Contextualized workforce education	20.8%	27.9%	13.9%
Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)	20.8%	18.6%	19.4%
Evidence-based instructional practices	20.8%	16.3%	15.3%
Multi-level classes	16.7%	24.4%	23.6%
Curriculum development, improvement and/or revision	16.7%	18.6%	27.8%
Instruction for adults with learning disabilities	16.7%	18.6%	16.7%
Equity in adult education	16.7%	17.4%	19.4%
Transitioning to remote online learning	16.7%	7%	12.5%
Transitions into postsecondary education and the workforce	12.5%	32.6%	16.7%
English Language Proficiency Standards implementation	12.5%	20.9%	23.6%
College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education implementation	12.5%	20.9%	18.1%
Learner goal setting	12.5%	17.4%	13.9%
Course outlines and lesson plans	8.3%	14.0%	23.6%
Learner needs assessment	8.3%	12.8%	13.9%
Transitioning to remote testing	8.3%	9.3%	8.3%
Working in collaborative teams	8.3%	8.1%	15.3%
Instructional strategies for specific program areas	4.2%	14.0%	15.3%

Figure 37. *Professional Development Priorities for Instructors. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2021–22 (Source: CASAS 2022)*

The *Digital Learning Guidance* lists qualities that should be taken into consideration when planning and implementing effective professional development; for example, it is long-term and ongoing, it is collaborative, it is personalized, and it provides opportunities for coaching and peer learning

as well as self-study and reflection.¹³ These are important whether professional development happens in-person, online, or in a blended arrangement and would seem to align with some informal supports for blended distance learning that all adult schools have implemented to some degree as shown in Figure 38.

WERE THERE OTHER INFORMAL SUPPORTS?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Implementation supports	85.7%	51.2%	43.5%
Help lines and tech support	64.3%	69.8%	39.1%
Community of practice	50.0%	34.9%	26.1%


Figure 38. *Blended Distance Learning Informal Supports. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)*

Among the professional development opportunities OTAN provided in PY 2021–22, the largest number of AEFLA Program Implementation Survey respondents mentioned that they benefited the most from training on various Google Suite tools and from sessions during the annual Technology and Distance Learning Symposium (TDLS), which was held virtually over two days in early March 2022. Some said they also found training with a focus on HyFlex learning, the Canvas Learning Management System, and participation in the Digital Leadership Academy useful. A few also pointed out the usefulness of the OTAN webinars and CASAS training.

When asked what professional development opportunities they would like in the future, most mentioned teaching and learning using Hyflex and Canvas. Some thought that continued training on Google Suite tools would be useful. And a few survey respondents pointed out that they would benefit the most from more TDLS sessions, online curriculum training and tasks including SCORM learning objects, as well as sharing best practices about instructional and assessment strategies, possibly as part of a Community of Practice (CoP).

Two survey respondents shared their appreciation for OTAN’s support:

- “We are MOST grateful for OTAN's topical trainings. Your support will ensure we are doing the best we can for our amazing students. Thank you.”
- “We appreciate your ongoing support. We also appreciate the variety of PD options for agencies in different places on the technology pendulum.”

13 Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN). California Adult Education Digital Learning Guidance, p. 61-62. <https://otan.us/Resources/DigitalLearningGuidance> 

Student Persistence

Persistence is a critical factor in the success and goal attainment of adult learners.¹⁴ The AEFLA Program Implementation Survey asked WIOA, Title II funded agencies about the strategies they used in PY 2021–22 to promote and sustain student persistence. Figure 39 shows that 91.7% of adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students indicated that their student persistence strategies included Remote learning, blended online learning, or hybrid/HyFlex while just over 81% said the same in adult schools with 100-700 distance learning students and almost 70% in adult schools with less than 100 distance learning students. In the previous year, 84.9% of all adult schools combined had indicated that their student persistence strategies included blended online and distance learning. Additionally, this year, 66.7%, 50%, and 44.4% respectively reported that they used Other COVID-related persistence strategies to support remote student learning. (e.g., flexible modalities of class offerings and access to technology) compared to only 37.8% combined the year before.

WHAT STRATEGIES ARE YOU USING TO PROMOTE AND SUSTAIN STUDENT PERSISTENCE?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Remote learning, blended online learning, hybrid/HyFlex	91.7%	81.4%	69.4%
Effective orientation and accurate classroom and level placement	91.7%	80.2%	81.9%
Monitoring attendance	91.7%	80.2%	79.2%
Student support services, such as counseling, childcare, bus passes, or using a transition specialist	91.7%	68.6%	55.6%
Students set attainable goals and monitor progress with staff	79.2%	66.3%	76.4%
Student incentives, such as attendance awards and certificates, formal recognition, and priority registration	75.0%	60.5%	52.8%
Update Local Assessment Policy to improve pre- and post-test pairs	75.0%	51.2%	43.1%
Other COVID-related persistence strategies to support remote student learning. (e.g., flexible modalities of class offerings and access to technology)	66.7%	50.0%	44.4%
Managed enrollment	50.0%	41.9%	40.3%

Figure 39. Student persistence. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2021–22 (Source: CASAS 2022)

14 California WIOA, Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Program Implementation Survey for the PY 2020–21, p. 5

When respondents were asked in the WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey more specifically about strategies used to promote and sustain student persistence in distance blended learning, 85.7% of adults schools with more than 700 distance learning students used Remote learning and Blended online learning and 64.3% had hybrid/HyFlex classes. For schools with a medium distance learning student enrollment Remote learning was the strategy used most and at a similar rate (81.4%) but Blended online learning (72.1%) and hybrid/HyFlex learning (53.5%) were strategies used less (Figure 40). Schools with less than 100 distance learning students relied on these and other COVID-related persistence strategies even less, probably because of lower distance learning student enrollment and a lesser need for persistence strategies in distance blended learning.

WHAT STRATEGIES ARE USED TO PROMOTE AND SUSTAIN STUDENT PERSISTENCE IN DISTANCE BLENDED LEARNING?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Remote learning	85.7%	81.4%	60.9%
Blended online learning	85.7%	72.1%	56.5%
Hybrid/HyFlex	64.3%	53.5%	30.4%
Other COVID-related persistence strategies	64.3%	51.2%	43.5%

Figure 40. *Blended Distance Learning Persistence Strategies. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)*

One respondent described their approach: “Constant teacher-student communication: emailing, texting, posting on Google Classroom, talked to Student(s) individually via Zoom or Google Meet, allowed for student absence or tardiness but set expectations, e.g., if absent, email for lesson, homework; work with colleagues of the same level, have students engaged in partner work, group work online. When hybrid/Hyflex, the same support for students in the classroom and students at home. Teachers and students worked very closely with the IT department to mitigate any technology issues that could hinder instruction.”

Another respondent said that their school introduced a hybrid model for intermediate low and above learners because online engagement was low. Loaner Chromebooks were available for ASE, ESL, and IET students. There was a student start page that provided students with basic training and troubleshooting videos, and teachers posted tasks in the LMS to accelerate students’ learning on their own time. Teachers monitored students’ progress on these tasks for distance learning attendance.

Another respondent provided a list of strategies their school used to boost persistence for distance learning students in remote instruction and hybrid/HyFlex learning settings:

- Improved access to technology via partnerships with free computers for all learners.
- Issuing hotspots and helping students sign up for free/low cost internet.
- Online, bilingual counselor meetings for all incoming students to set goals and schedule CASAS testing.
- Phone calls to all students who have not attended sufficiently for at least one week.

- ➔ Online orientation supporting managed open enrollment.
- ➔ One-on-one instructor Zoom appointments available throughout the week. Project-based learning activities that align to learning objectives and CASAS Competencies, helping students build skills and accelerate learning.
- ➔ Dedicated HSD orientation instructors to guide students through successful program start. Co-teachers assigned to support student learning.
- ➔ Expanded translation support through internship opportunities for intermediate EL students.
- ➔ Online tutors available through HSD curriculum 7 days per week.
- ➔ Expanded office staff outreach check in phone calls to all students in all programs.

Survey respondents also offered some overarching suggestions, such as participation in DLAC¹⁵ to develop and implement a cohesive plan, and collaboration with one of the 71 Adult Education Regional Consortia¹⁶ to provide transition services and connecting students to virtual services, such as introductory classes providing basic digital literacy and access to technology.

Waiting Lists

At agencies where waiting lists exist, students may or may not be offered an alternative educational opportunity for various reasons. Last year's Distance Learning Plan Update began exploring questions about the role of waitlists to capture students otherwise not served and to encourage agencies to offer more flexible alternatives to students waiting for a class of any delivery modality: Are students on waiting lists for in-person program options offered blended distance learning options? Do they retain their spots on the waiting list while participating in blended distance learning? Can waitlisted students decide to stay in blended distance learning classes or decide to return to in-person instruction when a spot in an on-site class is available?

The AEFLA Program Implementation Survey does not provide details about students on waiting lists. Identifying potential blended distance learning students on waitlists is not possible at this time and having moved away from collecting student-level data to class-level data does not allow for tracking individual student choices of different program delivery modalities. The WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey explored opportunities for distance blended learning related to waitlisted students in more detail.

AEFLA Program Implementation Survey results for PY 2021–22 show in Figure 41 that 62.5% of adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students, 51.2% of those with between 100 and 700, and 26.4% of the schools with less than 100 distance learning students maintained a waiting list. Last year, only 28% of all agencies combined maintained a waiting list but for reference about half maintained waiting lists in PY 2018–2019.

15 Digital Leadership Academy: <https://dlac.otan.us/> 

16 Directory of the Adult Education Regional Consortia: <https://caladulthood.org/ConsortiumDirectory> 

ARE YOU MAINTAINING A WAITING LIST?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	62.5%	51.2%	26.4%
No	37.5%	48.8%	73.6%

Figure 41. *Waiting Lists. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2021–22 (Source: CASAS 2022)*

When asked how many students currently¹⁷ were on the waiting list, the snapshot in Figure 42 shows that ABE/ASE and ESL have similar median numbers regardless of the number of distance learning students enrolled, except for a slightly higher number of ESL students in adult schools with between 100 and 700 distance learning students. In the previous year, the median for ESL students was 20 and for ABE/ASE was 26 combined.

IF YES, HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE CURRENTLY ON THE LIST? (CUMULATIVE MEDIAN)	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
ABE/ASE	38	21.5	20.5
ESL	36	27.5	21

Figure 42. *Students on Waiting Lists. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2021–22 (Source: CASAS 2022)*

Figure 43 shows that distance learning students on waiting lists for ABE/ASE and ESL classes had varying opportunities to take a class in the fall term of PY 2021–22. In the previous year, the median for ESL students was 35 and for ABE/ASE was 25 combined.

HOW MANY STUDENTS WERE NEVER ABLE TO TAKE A CLASS IN THE FALL TERM? (MEDIAN)	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
ABE/ASE	8	44.5	18.5
ESL	57.5	23	20

Figure 43. *Students on Waiting Lists. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2021–22 (Source: CASAS 2022)*

This year, provider agencies were also asked if they worked with adult education schools in their region to accommodate students. Between about two thirds to three quarters reported that they were not working with other schools as Figure 44 illustrates.

17 The AEFLA Program Implementation Survey for PY 2021–22 had to be completed by April 30, 2022.

DO YOU WORK WITH ADULT EDUCATION SCHOOLS IN YOUR REGION TO ACCOMMODATE STUDENTS?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	37.5%	32.6%	26.4%
No	62.5%	67.4%	73.6%

Figure 44. *Collaboration with Other Schools to Accommodate Students on Waiting Lists. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2021–22 (Source: CASAS 2022)*

When agencies were asked in more detail if their students were able to obtain information about blended distance options, over nine out of ten said that they were (Figure 45). Survey respondents explained that students can access class schedules, including distance and hybrid/HyFlex options online or at the adult school office. Classes are also promoted to the public through different marketing strategies, including radio advertisements, mailers, and robo calls. Outreach Specialists distribute class schedule information to local organizations and adult schools. Information about blended distance learning options is provided during orientation and counseling sessions for new and prospective students. One respondent explained further: “All students on waiting lists are contacted and assisted in finding other classes. Instructional aides, counselors, proctors, support assistants, admission and records staff, and faculty offer information to students about all the options available to take classes.”

ARE STUDENTS ABLE TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT BLENDED DISTANCE LEARNING OPTIONS?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	91.7%	96.3%	90.0%
No	7.1%	2.3%	4.3%

Figure 45. *Blended Distance Learning Information for Students. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)*

Figure 46 shows that waitlisted students at adult schools with a more than 700 distance learning student enrollment overwhelmingly (90.9%), but also a majority of those at schools with a medium distance learning enrollment (75%) and those with less than 100 distance learning students (66.7%), were offered distance blended learning options in PY 2021–22.

ARE STUDENTS ON THE WAITING LIST OFFERED DISTANCE BLENDED LEARNING OPTIONS?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	90.9%	75.0%	66.7%
No	9.1%	25.0%	33.3%

Figure 46. *Blended Distance Learning Options for Students on Waiting Lists. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)*

When asked if students retained their spot on the waiting list for in-person instruction, 81.8% in adults schools with more than 700 distance learning students, 75.0% in schools with a medium distance learning enrollment, and 71.4% in schools with less than 100 distance learning students said that they did (Figure 47). One respondent explained further with respect to adult schools in detention facilities: “Some students remain in remote learning until they can be accommodated for in-person instruction. Priorities are based on decisions by the detention facilities due to a number of security factors and physical space limitations. One facility is Independent Study and remote learning only due to the design of the facility.”

DO THEY RETAIN THEIR SPOT ON THE WAITING LIST FOR IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION?	Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	Adult Schools >100 and <700	Adult Schools <100 DL Learners
Yes	81.8%	75.0%	71.4%
No	18.2%	25.0%	28.6%

Figure 47. *Blended Distance Learning In-person Options for Waitlisted Students. WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey Results (Source: OTAN 2023)*

Summary and Recommendations

This report provides information on the current state of blended distance learning in California WIOA Title II funded adult education, based on annually collected data by CASAS and OTAN. Gathering more detailed information on current issues was well received, despite concerns of oversurveying the field. One respondent of the additional OTAN survey in early 2023 summed up their adult school's efforts to provide blended distance learning for their students in the last program year this way: "Thank you very much for taking the time to ask about our distance learning experience. For our agency, it was somewhat difficult to provide the classes for our students [...] due to the lack of technology and the resources that were limited for our students. Your service and support are appreciated greatly! THANK YOU VERY MUCH!"

There are several recommendations for future activities in the following key areas.

OTAN Supports

- Provide teacher training and support on blended distance learning, hybrid/HyFlex options, and using technology effectively in different learning environments.
- Continue to be responsive to the field (i.e., LMS support, technology integration) and flexible enough to offer professional development and support whenever and wherever needed.
- Explore and introduce the field to new technologies as appropriate (e.g., generative AI).
- Offer more sessions at the Technology and Distance Learning Symposium (TDLS), especially those with a connection to distance learning and data collection.
- Continue to offer short- and long-term professional development opportunities (e.g., DLAC) that have an impact directly on program development.
- Explore establishing a Community of Practice (CoP) for instructors and administrators to share best practices about topics such as instructional and assessment strategies.
- Explore additional activities or programs that offer more support through co-collaboration and delivery with other leadership projects.
- Provide future-proofing training to help agencies anticipate future events and develop methods to plan for and minimize the potential impacts.

Policy Development

- Definitions of delivery modalities: What is distance, independent learning, HyFlex, other flex models, and the implementation guidelines of each. Partner with sister organizations in these efforts, especially as they relate to data collection and reporting. This issue could be addressed through continued work with state leadership partners and the US Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE).
- Arbitrary criteria (e.g., 50% = distance; independent study vs distance): Agencies need guidance with consistent definitions and practices which must go hand-in-hand with reporting so criteria are better reflected in CASAS data. (A suggestion to perhaps augment the NRS guidelines for the California adult education situation?)

The Digital Learning Guidance

- Continue to explore where data collected by CASAS and OTAN helps to inform topics in the California Adult Education Digital Learning Guidance.
- Identify gaps in annually collected data that could further inform topics and support strategies and recommendations in the Digital Learning Guidance.

Future Research

- Explore student access to digital devices, Internet connectivity, and digital skills training, and the way students are able to leverage online engagement, study, and activities into tangible outcomes.
- Focus additional data collection by OTAN via the WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update Survey on current issues in PY 2022–2023, acknowledging that issues shift from year-to-year.

Appendices

Appendix A: Survey tools

Student Technology Intake Survey

File attachment: [StudentTechIntakeSurvey-r1-a11y.pdf](#) 

Continuous Improvement Plan Teacher Assessment

File attachment: [CA OTAN Teacher Survey for CIP.pdf](#) 

AEFLA Program Implementation Survey

File attachment: [2021-22 AEFLA Program Implementation Survey_FINAL.docx](#) 

WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey

File attachment: [WIOA Title II Technology and Distance Learning California Update for PY 2021–2022 Survey.pdf](#) 

Appendix B: Adult schools identifying DL enrollments

Figure 48 lists all adult schools in the categories of more than 700 distance students and between 100 and 700 distance learning students for PY 2021–22, PY 2020–21, PY 2019–20, and PY 2018–19. This figure uses the same color coding as several other figures in this report to delineate this categorization across program years. Agencies that have participated in OTAN’s Digital Leadership Academy (DLAC) are also color coded. The table is sorted by PY 2021–22; however, color coding illustrates which categories adult schools fell into in the previous program years.

LEGEND:
Adult Schools with more than 700 learners
Adult Schools with 100-700 learners
Adult Schools with less than 100 learners
Former agencies that have participated in OTAN’s DLAC

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS >700 DL LEARNERS	% 21-22	N 21-22	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	58.8%	39,735	64.9%	57,595	67.3%	47,411	48.3%	5,192
Los Angeles Unified School District		9,804		19,488		23,180		610
Five Keys School and Programs		3,055		1,677		n/a		n/a

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS >700 DL LEARNERS	% 21-22	N 21-22	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Los Angeles Community College District		2,798		2,725		3,660		9
Mount San Antonio Community College District		2,043		1,597		1,581		1
Stockton Unified School District		1,768		1,270		1,422		1,425
San Bernardino City Unified School District		1,566		1,356		1,157		22
Antelope Valley Union High School District		1,564		n/a		n/a		n/a
Grossmont Union High School District		1,497		1,830		1,484		235
El Monte Union High School District		1,321		273		628		736
Five Keys School and Programs (Jail Program)		1,321		235		n/a		n/a
Montebello Unified School District		1,170		1,362		1,552		19
MiraCosta Community College District		1,160		1,531		571		n/a
Torrance Unified School District		1,021		921		1,101		139
Oxnard Union High School District		952		1,408		177		n/a
Kern Union High School District		883		n/a		n/a		n/a
Coachella Valley Unified School District		873		1,389		690		704
Fresno Unified School District		843		933		211		22
Chaffey Joint Union High School District		804		1,218		n/a		n/a
Visalia Unified School District		797		690		479		n/a
South Orange County Community College District		783		678		n/a		n/a
Corona-Norco Unified School District		772		782		162		n/a
Elk Grove Unified School District		757		755		65		176
Lake Elsinore Unified School District		750		821		506		672
Campbell Union High School District		724		778		366		n/a
Pasadena Area Community College District		709		554		987		n/a
ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS >100 AND <700	% 21-22	N 21-22	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Adult Schools with >100 and <700	37.7%	25,501	32.7%	29,020	30.8%	21,671	39.3%	4,228
Mount San Jacinto Community College District		668		966		946		n/a
Clovis Unified School District		665		1,134		690		n/a
San Juan Unified School District		665		574		148		172

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS >100 AND <700	% 21-22	N 21-22	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Santa Rosa Junior College		665		345		420		n/a
Fremont Unified School District		663		595		579		291
Paramount Unified School District		619		761		82		92
Escondido Union High School District		612		n/a		n/a		n/a
Riverside Unified School District		583		791		62		7
Vallejo City Unified School District		575		n/a		n/a		n/a
Cerritos Community College District		543		544		440		n/a
Fremont Union High School District		511		545		n/a		n/a
Redondo Beach Unified School District		465		653		479		4
San Leandro Unified School District		455		564		551		3
Fontana Unified School District		454		557		626		351
Berkeley Unified School District		446		571		177		107
Val Verde Unified School District		438		199		n/a		n/a
Sweetwater Union High School District		410		1,285		568		1,538
Culver City Unified School District		408		456		585		n/a
Hacienda La Puente Unified School District		404		847		232		5
Twin Rivers Unified School District		402		427		8		n/a
Whittier Union High School District		402		723		135		1
North Orange County Community College District		393		921		184		n/a
Sutter County Office of Education		386		397		301		n/a
Mount Diablo Unified School District		382		853		864		66
Covina-Valley Unified School District		370		556		9		1
San Diego Unified School District		362		304		n/a		n/a
Sequoia Union High School District		315		621		729		2
West Contra Costa Unified School District		313		461		312		63
Oroville Union High School District		309		320		9		n/a
Turlock Unified School District		308		367		109		38
Coast Community College District		307		359		286		n/a
Tamalpais Union High School District		307		274		119		57
Ventura Unified School District		300		766		51		1
Petaluma Joint Union High School District		297		434		243		105
Chino Valley Unified School District		293		914		n/a		1
Tustin Unified School District		289		n/a		n/a		n/a
Acalanes Union High School District		276		166		198		n/a

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS >100 AND <700	% 21-22	N 21-22	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Moreno Valley Unified School District		275		387		1		6
Madera Unified School District		274		236		349		453
BPSOS Center for Community Advancement		266		197		n/a		n/a
Napa Valley Unified School District		264		511		n/a		n/a
Castro Valley Unified School District		262		n/a		n/a		n/a
New Haven Unified School District		258		372		192		2
Rialto Unified School District		255		226		n/a		n/a
Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District		253		n/a		n/a		n/a
Rancho Santiago Community College District		253		132		70		n/a
Merced Union High School District		238		n/a		n/a		n/a
El Rancho Unified School District		232		196		n/a		n/a
Salinas Union High School District		232		910		145		1
Placer Union High School District		227		126		106		n/a
Sanger Unified School District				317		n/a		n/a
Simi Valley Unified School District		214		263		106		43
Folsom Cordova Unified School District		213		412		70		99
Jefferson Union High School District		206		298		88		25
Pleasanton Unified School District		200		222		n/a		n/a
Lompoc Unified School District		197		222		n/a		n/a
Porterville Unified School District		197		376		7		1
Pajaro Valley Unified School District		195		715		10		9
ABC Unified School District		194		n/a		n/a		n/a
William S. Hart High School District		186		n/a		n/a		n/a
Huntington Beach Union High School District		181		1,018		660		789
Oakland Unified School District		180		n/a		n/a		n/a
Jurupa Unified School District		178		314		n/a		n/a
Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District		174		457		569		n/a
Inglewood Unified School District		172		205		n/a		n/a
Beaumont Unified School District		167		172		115		29
Liberty Union High School District		166		314		102		78
Gonzales Unified School District		164		104		73		n/a
Roseville Joint Union High School District		162		n/a		n/a		n/a
Monterey Peninsula Unified School District		160		252		24		n/a

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS >100 AND <700	% 21-22	N 21-22	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Rowland Unified School District		157		n/a		n/a		n/a
Desert Community College District		151		126		n/a		n/a
Burbank Unified School District		147		631		823		n/a
Murrieta Valley Unified School District		145		199		259		90
Lucia Mar Unified School District		142		143		216		39
East Side Union High School District		141		103		318		43
Palo Alto Unified School District		140		306		316		32
Long Beach Unified School District		139		197		405		5
Pars Equality Center, Los Angeles		138		255		n/a		n/a
Self-Help for the Elderly		135		n/a		n/a		n/a
Pittsburg Unified School District		123		145		564		57
Elk Grove Unified School District (Jail Program)		121		203		n/a		n/a
Antioch Unified School District		120		126		n/a		n/a
Woodland Joint Unified School District		108		n/a		n/a		n/a
Cabrillo College		105		n/a		n/a		n/a
Charter Oak Unified School District		104		n/a		n/a		n/a
Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint Unified School District		103		237		50		136

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS >100 DL LEARNERS	% 21-22	N 21-22	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Adult Schools with < 100 learners	3.5%	2,352	2.4%	2,134	2.0%	1,401	12.4%	1,334
Total of Identified DL Enrollments	100%	67,588	100%	88,749	100%	70,483	100%	10,754

Figure 48. List of adult schools with enrollment of distance students of > 700, 100-700 and < 100 for the program years 2021–22, 2020–21, 2019–20, and 2018–2019. Federal NRS Report. (Source: CASAS 2022)